

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

1. **(Currently Amended)** A method for producing a fish sauce having improved hedonic characteristics, comprising:

treating a fish sauce in which undesirable odor components are required to be reduced or eliminated, for 2 to 16 hours at a pH of 9.0 to 10.0, under a temperature of 40°C or lower and under a reduced pressure of 80 to 180 Torr; and ~~optionally~~

adjusting the pH of a resultant fish sauce to 4.5 to 7.0 if the pH of the resultant fish sauce is outside of the range of 4.5 to 7.0.

2. **(Currently Amended)** A method for producing a fish sauce having improved hedonic characteristics, comprising:

treating a fish sauce, in which undesirable odor components are desired to be reduced or eliminated, for 2 to 16 hours at a pH of 9.0 to 10.0, under a temperature of 40°C or lower and under a reduced pressure of 80 to 180 Torr, and ~~optionally~~ adjusting the pH of a resultant fish sauce to 4.5 to 7.0 if the pH of the resultant fish sauce is outside of the range of 4.5 to 7.0; and

further concentrating the treated fish sauce under a reduced pressure of 80 to 180 Torr, and a temperature of from 40 to 80°C to obtain a water content in the fish sauce of 10% to 35%, thereby converting the fish sauce to a paste.

3-4. **(Cancelled)**

5. **(Currently Amended)** A method for producing a fish sauce with improved hedonic characteristics, comprising the steps of:

placing a fish sauce or a raw material for producing the fish sauce under reduced pressure of 80 to 180 Torr at a pH of 9.0 to 10.0, and under a temperature of 40°C or lower, and optionally

if the pH of a resultant fish sauce is outside of the range of 4.5 to 7.0, adjusting the pH of the resultant fish sauce to 4.5 to 7.0 so as to reduce at least one undesirable odor component selected from the group consisting of 2-methylpropanal, 2-methylbutanal, 2-ethylpyridine, and dimethyl trisulfide, which is contained in the fish sauce or in the raw material for producing the fish sauce.

6. **(Previously Presented)** The method for producing a fish sauce as claimed in claim 5, wherein

undesirable odor components are reduced to such an extent that when analyzed with gas chromatography with an internal standard comprising 3  $\mu$ l of 1% cyclohexanol any one of the following relations (1) to (4) is fulfilled:

- (1) The ratio of the peak area value of 2-methylpropanal to the peak area value of the internal standard substance is  $\leq 2.0$ ;
- (2) The ratio of the peak area value of 2-methylbutanal to the peak area value of the internal standard substance is  $\leq 0.4$ ;
- (3) The ratio of the peak area value of 2-ethylpyridine to the peak area value of the internal standard substance is  $\leq 0.001$ ; and

(4) The ratio of the peak area value of dimethyl trisulfide to the peak area value of the internal standard substance is  $\leq 0.012$ .

7. (Previously Presented) The method for producing a fish sauce as claimed in claim 6, wherein

undesirable odor components are reduced to such an extent as to satisfy any one of the relations (3) and (4) as defined in claim 6.

8. (Previously Presented) The method for producing a fish sauce as claimed in any one of claims 5 to 7, wherein

at least one of the undesirable odor components selected from the group consisting of 2-methylpropanal, 2-methylbutanal, 2-ethylpyridine, and dimethyl trisulfide is reduced to half or less of that existing in the fish sauce before treatment under reduced pressure.

9.-10. (Cancelled)